

FORESTRY

Forests cover more than 31 million acres of California, and are as varied as the state's climatic regions and landscapes. California's forests are among the most productive forested landscapes in the world, and provide a wide range of benefits for both rural and urban communities. In addition to wood products, they provide wildlife habitat, open space, clean water, and livestock range. California's forests also help us address greenhouse gasses by sequestering carbon, and providing materials for current and next-generation bioenergy production such as cellulosic ethanol.

Approximately 14.5 million acres of California's forests are privately owned, and the majority of this land is small family owned holdings. Forest landowners need assistance to carry out management practices that enhance the natural resource values of the forest lands they manage. Management techniques that help forests grow healthy and reduce greenhouse gas contamination can also



reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire.

The Farm Bill can provide needed support for forest management activities. Funds are needed for technical assistance and sharing the cost of resource-conserving management activities. Funds are also required to protect

private forests threatened by development if those forests provide important wildlife habitat, watershed values, and carbon sequestration.

The Farm Bill's Forestry, Conservation, and Energy titles provide the framework to address these needs. Forest conservation needs can be

addressed through cost share dollars for forest management in the Conservation title, funds for forest biomass-to-energy projects in the Energy title, and forest planning and technical assistance in the Forestry title.

California Supports:

- Conservation title enhancements to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program to prioritize forest management practices and promote cost-share and incentive funds for forest conservation.
- Changes in the Forestry title to develop and support statewide assessments for forest resources, create a new competitive program for allocating a portion of Forest title funds, and reauthorization of the Healthy Forest Reserve Program or other programs to protect forestland threatened with fragmentation or development.
- Energy title improvements to promote loan guarantees for bio-refineries, and a Forest Bioenergy Research program to support biomass-based energy resources.